

RESTRICTED  
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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE TWENTY-SECOND MEETING

held at the King David Hotel, Jerusalem,  
on Saturday, 12 March 1949, at 11 a.m.

Present: Mr. Ethridge (U.S.A.) - Chairman  
\*Mr. Benoist (France)  
\*Mr. de La Tour du Pin (France)  
\*Mr. Eralp (Turkey)  
\*Mr. Halderman (U.S.A.)  
Mr. Azcarate - Principal Secretary

\*Alternate

Beirut Meetings

Mr. AZCARATE reported that official acceptance of the Commission's invitation had been received from the Governments of Syria and Lebanon; Transjordan had accepted unofficially. The Government of Iraq had declined owing to recent political manifestations in Beirut.

Mr. de la TOUR DU PIN suggested that the members of the Commission should individually contact their Governments' representatives in Beirut with a view to adjusting the question between the Governments of Iraq and Lebanon and also obtaining further information from the Governments which had not yet replied officially.

Mr. AZCARATE suggested that an invitation should be extended to Mr. Griffis to attend the meetings and to appoint a member of his staff as liaison officer with the Commission during its stay in Beirut.

The Commission approved both suggestions.

Mr. COOK (Administrative Officer) reported on the administrative arrangements for the meetings.

Refugee Question

The CHAIRMAN remarked that the Commission's approach to any further peace negotiations must be through a settlement of the refugee problem, which was of paramount importance. He recalled that Mr. Shertok had, ten days previously, promised the Commission a statement on the refugee question; it was now reported that such a statement was not considered but that the Government of Israel would supply the Conciliation Commission with a study that it had made regarding the measures to be taken for the resettlement of refugees, mostly elsewhere than in Israel. This document would not be delivered until 14 March, the day of Mr. Shertok's departure for New York. The lack of a conciliatory statement from the Government of Israel on the question might well jeopardise the chances of success of the Beirut talks. The Chairman proposed that the Commission should put itself on record in the matter by an immediate telegram to Mr. Shertok, expressing the firm hope that the statement would be forthcoming in time for the Commission to discuss it with Mr. Shertok before his departure.

Mr. de la TOUR DU PIN endorsed the Chairman's view regarding the prime importance of obtaining the statement. He mentioned the recent Israeli military activity reported near Akaba; and also a recent shift in the lines in the Bethlehem-Hebron area, which had resulted in a new movement of refugees towards Hebron. Those two incidents, if added to the Commission's inability to report a definite stand by the Government of Israel concerning the refugees, would certainly render its position at Beirut extremely difficult.

The Commission approved the Chairman's proposal.

The CHAIRMAN drew attention to various points which would probably be raised by the Arab Governments at Beirut in the event that no statement of the Jewish attitude was forthcoming; he thought the Commission should consider during the following week what stand it would take on those points.

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It would be necessary for the Commission to endeavour to persuade the Arab Governments of the necessity of their accepting a considerable number of the refugees; they would certainly ask what help could be given them in the interim period before permanent resettlement, and also on what basis they would accept the refugees. The Commission must consider the problem of trying, through the United Nations, to get public and private commitments for further financial aid. The Arab Governments should if possible, in his opinion, be persuaded to institute some form of interim public works on which the refugees could be employed, and, for the organization and financing of such projects, to apply to the United Nations for technical missions and financial aid through loans.

The question of the refugee expert must also be settled. He had no objection to the appointment of Mr. Tellec as a technical expert, although he had doubts regarding his qualifications for the long-term resettlement project. He suggested that Mr. Griffis might be willing to assign Mr. Tellec to the Commission on loan as liaison officer and expert during the Commission's stay in Beirut; the Commission would thus be able to estimate Mr. Tellec's capacities.

It was agreed that the Principal Secretary should telegraph such a request to Mr. Griffis.

In reply to a question from the Chairman, Mr. AZCARATE reported that the Working Paper giving suggestions regarding the Commission's approach to the Beirut talks, as well as a substantive treatment of the refugee question, would be ready that evening; the Commission might consider it at a meeting on Monday.

#### Communications from Dr. Bunche

Mr. AZCARATE presented two telegrams received from the Acting Mediator: one concerned the cease-fire agreement concluded between Israel and Transjordan, the other a report to the Security Council regarding the alleged Israeli operations against Transjordan in the south Negev near Akaba.

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Office in the Arab sector

Mr. COOK reported that arrangements had been concluded for the Commission's office in the Arab sector, although owing to the necessity of repairs it could not be occupied until 20 March.

Report of the Committee on Jerusalem

Mr. HALDERMAN (Chairman) reported that the Committee hoped to arrange a meeting with Mr. Comay and Mr. Lifschitz for the following Monday. It had held meetings during the past week with the mayors of Bethlehem and Beit Jala and was still endeavouring to arrange conversations with the Jewish and Arab mayors of Jerusalem. The appointment of a Transjordanian representative to meet with the Committee was being delayed.

Mr. Halderman explained that the Committee had gone as far as it could in formulating the stand it would take in the conversations being arranged. The Committee now hoped to ascertain the position of the Government of Israel, which would form an essential part of the Committee's report to the Commission. It was the Committee's feeling that that report should perhaps be incorporated in a progress report by the Commission to the General Assembly at its April session. The Committee's report would comprise two parts: (1) observations arising from its own discussions and study, and (2) two general outline schemes for a Jerusalem regime - the one to be the "optimum" plan envisaged by the Committee, the other an alternative plan representing the best that seemed possible of achievement. The Committee's report would be drafted after its meeting with the Israeli representatives and would be submitted to the Commission by Saturday, 19 March.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.